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CONTACT DETAILS OF THE GCIS PROVINCIAL OFFICES

For more information about similar programmes that are run across the country, contact one of the following provincial offices:

EASTERN CAPE

Ndlelantle Pinyana
043 722 2602 or 076 142 8606
ndlelantle@gcis.gov.za

FREE STATE

Mamogolo Dirane
051 448 4504 or 072 928 6068
mamogolo@gcis.gov.za

GAUTENG

Peter Gumede
011 331 0164 or 083 570 8080
peterg@gcis.gov.za

KWAZULU-NATAL

Ndala Mngadi
031 301 6787 or 082 877 9420
ndala@gcis.gov.za

PRIORITY 1: ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION AND JOB CREATION.

Youth exposed to economic opportunities

By Masego Mollo: GCIS, Northern Cape

The Government Communication and Information System in partnership with the Phokwane Local Municipality, facilitated an information-sharing session on education and skills development for the unemployed youth of Pampierstad at Mogomotsi Youth Centre on 14 August 2019.

The events were held in commemoration of Women's Month, with the purpose of exposing young people to the available economic opportunities. Stakeholders presented and shared valuable information about their services and also distributed brochures and other information material that the youth could benefit from.

Representatives from the Northern Cape Premier's Education Trust Fund presented their bursary and study loan for unemployed youth, while the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) shared information on their business grant and how it can be accessed. The NYDA also committed to a five-day workshop, where the two groups would be trained on how to draft a curriculum vitae, develop business plans and manage a sustainable business.

The youth were afforded the opportunity to register their details on the NYDA's database for the upcoming Premier's Artisanal Programme, which is aimed at skilling and reskilling Northern Cape youth.



The youth of Pampierstad who were in attendance.



government
communications

Department:
Government Communication and Information System
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



LIMPOPO

Thanyani Ravhura
015 291 4689 or 082 421 3461
thanyani@gcis.gov.za

MPUMALANGA

Jerry Nkosi
013 753 2397 or 082 316 5295
Jerry@gcis.gov.za

NORTH WEST

Boitumelo Mosadi
018 381 7071 or 073 245 0906
boitumelom@gcis.gov.za

NORTHERN CAPE

Marius Nagel
053 832 1378/9 or 083 778 9179
mariusn@gcis.gov.za

WESTERN CAPE

Geraldine Thopps
021 418 0533/2307 or 081 281 2200
Geraldine@gcis.gov.za



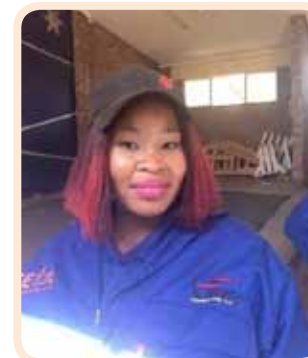
Kgalalelo Medupe said:

"Youth unemployment is a serious concern in this province. We need all the SETAs here, to create awareness about skills. We need similar programmes such as this one because a huge percentage of the youth are unemployed."



Refentse Molaye said

"What a programme. The presenters were well prepared and knew what they were talking about. I learnt a lot. I will definitely share the message. We need growth and development as the youth of Pampierstad and these organisations are our entry point to growth."



Veronica Morake said:

"This was a very insightful programme. Young people can really benefit from programmes like this. I think we need more information on NSFAS and the courses offered at the Sol Plaatje University. We would really appreciate an information-sharing session with one of the university's mentors to explain their faculties in detail."

PRIORITY 2: EDUCATION, SKILLS AND HEALTH.

Free State commemorates Women's Month

By Ntombi Mhlambi: GCIS, Free State

The Free State Provincial Legislature commemorated Women's Month with the learners of Letsete Secondary School in Thabong on 16 August 2019. The programme was part of the institution's programme to give back to the community by donating school uniform, oral hygiene and sanitary towels to disadvantaged learners.

Free State Provincial Legislature Speaker Ntombizanele Sifuba said it was very important that learners know that the freedom enjoyed today was fought for by the women of 1956. She also acknowledged how the school groomed her to be who she is today as she was a teacher there before becoming an active politician. Different stakeholders presented on various services that they render, which the youth can take advantage of.



Thandiwe Tshabalala said:

"It was a beautiful event. It taught me not to forget where I started."



Mpho Oliphant said:

"I wish government can build us schools like those in town with state-of-the-art laboratory and hall."



The learners of Letsete Secondary School listening to different speakers.



Free State Legislature Speaker Ntombizanele Sifuba addressing the learners.

PRIORITY 4: SPATIAL INTEGRATION, HUMAN SETTLEMENTS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

Government engages the public on land reform

By Nontuthuzelo Jas: GCIS, Mpumalanga

The Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, Thoko Didiza, addressed the land reform debate at the University of Mpumalanga, Mbombela Campus on 16 August 2019. Addressing a hall packed with university students and land reform stakeholders, the Minister indicated that the Natives Land Act, 1913 (Act 27 of 1913) hit the nail in the codification of dispossession into law. "This Act led to large masses of people becoming pariahs in the land of their forefathers," she said.

Minister Didiza further indicated that there was a need for people to be sensitive to other issues such as "What happens to a person who bought land in the open market and has not benefitted or inherited a piece of land?" She therefore emphasised that as much as the land issue may be explosive and emotive, it needs to be dealt with rationally without attaching emotions to it.

Attendees raised several concerns, with one farmer wanting to know what land would be targeted for expropriation and when a document would be produced to outline the process. In her response, the Minister indicated that a legal framework has not been finalised. She, however, mentioned that land that is currently unused could be considered.

Another participant wanted to know whether the 'willing buyer– willing seller' would still be used if Section 25 of the Constitution is reviewed. The Minister indicated that expropriation of land without compensation was one of the tools that would be considered. She indicated that people should not forget that there were some land owners who were willing to donate their land.

As she drew towards conclusion, Minister Didiza said that spatial integration and economic livelihood should be investigated. "There remains unequal land ownership in our country, which cannot be overlooked, and the onus is upon the current generation to deal with the current issues," the Minister said. She also indicated that the State has heeded the call to release the land that it owns for agriculture and land development; a process that Deputy President David Mabuza is busy with.

There have been several discussions, including the 2005 Land Summit, which were held to discuss the land issue. Some of the summit's resolutions are now being revisited, such as the land expropriation and land tax. The slow pace of land reform continues to be a thorn in the flesh, with some of the political organisations calling for land expropriation without compensation. It is these discussions that have led to the debate on whether Section 25 of the Constitution needs to be amended or not, which were followed by nationwide consultations.



Minister Thoko Didiza addressing students and stakeholders on land reform.



Participants engaging in land reform.



Goodness Nxumalo said:

"In my 20 years of experience as a social worker, I have learnt that victims got stuck in abusive relationships because they interpret physical abuse as an act of true love."



Thokoza Zulu said:

"The most painful experience was when I was four months pregnant. I felt labour pains and asked my husband to stay with me instead he literally locked me up with my two little children and went to see his girlfriend. That was when I decided to leave home."

PRIORITY 5: SOCIAL COHESION AND SAFE COMMUNITIES.

Survivors of gender-based violence speak out

By Mlungisi Dlamini: GCIS, KwaZulu-Natal

In observing Women's Month, the Government Communication and Information System through its uMgungundlovu District Office coordinated a talk show on women survivors of gender-based violence (GBV) on uMgungundlovu FM to highlight the scourge of violence faced by women. The event was held on 14 August 2019 and came after the Commission for Gender Equality published findings on GBV affecting Plessislaer, which is under the uMgungundlovu District. This area has been identified as one of the hot spots of violence in the country according to recent reports.

The radio programme was held under the theme: "25 Years of Democracy: Growing South Africa Together for Women's Emancipation". Non-governmental organisations (NGOs), Families Association South Africa (FAMSA) and The Heavens highlighted different types and causes of GBV, which predominantly affect women.

Thokoza Zulu, who has survived violence and was admitted at the women's shelter, said she has been called names by her husband's family and treated unfairly. "My husband would come back home after a long time, make me pregnant and go back to the city," she said.

Lungile Masuku from FAMSA said GBV has three stages, which are honeymoon stage, tension build-up stage and abusive stage. The build-up and abusive stage is where victims get emotionally and physically abused, and then the circle goes back to honeymoon where perpetrators seek redress. She said this is the same reason some women got stuck into aggressive relationship. FAMSA provides counselling and education focusing on violence and trauma, HIV and AIDS, abusive relationships, poverty and relationship breakdown.



Lungile Masuku from FAMSA sharing information on abuse and how the organisation assists victims.



Victims of gender-based violence and members of non-governmental organisations during the talk show.